

FAITH AND REASON IN AQUINAS AND LLULL

What often goes by the name of «the problem of faith and reason» —and by extension the derivative problems of theology and philosophy and of science and religion— will always be of interest to thinkers who are philosophically inclined and possessed of authentic religious convictions, especially if they adhere to one of the great monotheist religions. Almost certainly it cannot be otherwise if by «faith» we understand —in correct Christian terminology,— one of the theological virtues,¹ as well as both its distinctive object and character of activity; and if by «reason»² we have in mind man's natural cognitive powers and the knowledge obtained by means of them without any sort of supernatural assistance. Such has been the understanding of those terms by those thinkers whom historians and other students of philosophy are wont to identify as «Christian philosophers», particularly if they lived during the Middle Ages and were associated with our earliest universities. Speaking of those Medieval philosophers an author recently wrote that a constant theme of theirs was the mentioned problem of faith and reason.³ On the ensuing pages my intention is to compare briefly the somewhat contrasting attitudes on and answers to that problem as understood by two great acknowledged medieval thinkers, namely Thomas Aquinas and Ramon Llull.

At the outset we ought to point out that, notwithstanding differences on important details, there is no outright opposition between those two thinkers on the main questions that constitute the problem of faith and reason. It should be noted at least that the slightly later —and today slightly less known— Ramon Llull was neither attacking nor opposing the positions taken by Aquinas on the main questions a few years before Llull embarked on his own literary career, as

¹ St. Thomas, *Summa theologiae*, I-IIae, q. 62, aa. 1/2, in *Opera Latina*, Leonine ed. (Rome, 1891), Vol. 6, pp. 401/2. For an authoritative concise statement of the Christian understanding of faith see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994), p. 446.

² St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, I, q. 79, a. 8 (1889), Vol. 5, p. 274.

³ Llinares, Armand, *Raymond Lulle, philosophe de l'action* (Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963), p. 257.

seemingly intimidated by the author just cited in a book wherein he explains Llull's philosophy rather well otherwise.⁴ To come across differences in the solutions of the two thinkers to the problem of faith and reason, even on significant details, ought not to surprise us greatly, provided we keep in mind their diverse approaches to it, the result in part undoubtedly of their different backgrounds and of their immediate objectives as regard those whom they wished to reach via their writings. By reason of his vocation and worthy profession as a school or university teacher during most of his adult life, Aquinas was mainly engaged in the instruction of younger religious confreres and of possibly other young Christians linked in some fashion to the mendicant order known as the Order of Preachers. As a consequence most of his many writings were primarily addressed to readers who shared his own Catholic Faith, at least in its essentials. Quite differently on the other hand, Llull lived most of his formative years, and not a few later ones, in areas of his native Spain until recently occupied and inhabited by the followers of Islam, as well as by a not insignificant number of Jewish believers. One of three challenging and lofty objectives to which Llull chose to dedicate his relatively long life required of him that he work constantly and courageously for the conversion of leading believers in those two groups, who, well regarded because of learning or of their high social position, might then influence their correligionists to become Christians.⁵ Llull's numerous books and a dramatic autobiographical account,⁶ dictated by him to friends five years before his death, provide abundant proof of both the earnestness and the constancy of his endeavors in that direction.

The problem of faith and reason—with the questions linked to it—is occasioned by the acknowledgement by Christians—as well as by other believers at least implicitly—of two very distinct orders or kinds of truths.⁷ Those two orders are not simply distinct, but at times may even appear to clash with one another in some sort of opposition,⁸ if not by their very content, certainly because of their different sources and in the manner in which the truths have become known to us. For instance, in matters that refer primarily to God Aquinas explicitly asserts that there are two distinct kinds of truths which have become known to man in two very different ways.⁹ We have, he tells us first, a number

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 258

⁵ See «Historical Background and Life of Ramon Llull», in *Selected Works of Ramon Llull*, tr. Anthony Bonner (Princeton, 1985), Vol. 1, pp. 15-16.

⁶ Under the title *Vita coetanea* the original Latin Text may be read in *ROL* VIII, pp. 272-304.

⁷ St. Thomas, *Summa contra gentiles sive de veritate catholicae fidei*, bk. 1, c. 3, in *Opera Latina*, Leonine ed. (Rome: 1918), Vol. 18, p. 7.

⁸ *Ibid.*, c. 7, Vol. 18, p. 19.

⁹ «Sunt igitur quaedam intelligibilia divinorum, quae rationi humanae sunt pervia; quaedam vero, quae omnino vim humanae rationis excedunt.» *Ibid.*, c. 3, Vol. 18, p. 8.

of truths which totally escape the power of the human intellect or reason to discover and to establish rationally beyond any questions and doubt. The Catholic doctrines of the Trinity and of the Incarnation are two instances of such truths that a Christian may readily give or cite. They are truths which can be known by us only because God has chosen to reveal them to us. With some other truths which as a matter of God chose to reveal by reason of their intimate connection with man's ultimate destiny, they constitute the essential teachings of the Christian Religion and Faith. Of the truths that absolutely required to be divinely revealed in order for man to learn about them Aquinas would have us speak as «articles of faith.»¹⁰ Other actually revealed truths which did not altogether need to have been revealed —because they are in principle discoverable or demonstrable in principle by human reason— Aquinas would rather identify as «preambles» or *praesupposita* of the faith,¹¹ though he did indeed accept the fact that God has actually revealed them. There is then accordingly, according to Aquinas also and as he proceeds to explain more explicitly, another type of truths, a second order of truths, about which man can learn, and which may at times speak mainly about God, although in most cases they have to do with ourselves and the world around us. These other truths, however, are at least in principle discoverable by us, working exclusively with our natural cognitive powers in their natural condition or way. Of such natural powers the one we name «intellect» or «reason» is what chiefly enables us to discover and accept them. Unlike the first type of truths which require divine intervention if man is to know about them initially, the second order of truths extends to all naturally knowable truths. But as already noted, God actually chose to reveal some of these naturally discoverable truths on account of their importance and necessity for humans to achieve their ultimate end or destiny.¹² These are the truths which Aquinas, we said already, would have us call or speak of as «preambles of the faith.»

Ramon Llull, as his numerous writings clearly show, was a careful and well instructed Christian thinker. Indications abound that, although he did not always use the same words Aquinas used, Llull also distinguished the two mentioned orders of truths. We find proof of it in both his early and his later writings. In an encyclopedic *Liber contemplationis in Deum*,¹³ with which he practically initia-

¹⁰ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.* II-IIae, q. 1, a. 6 (1895), Vol. 8, p. 18.

¹¹ St. Thomas, *Quaestio disputata de veritate*, q. 14, a. 9, ad 8, in *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* in *Opera Omnia*, Leonine ed. (Rome, 1972), Vol. 22, p. 464. Also *Summa theol.*, I, q. 2, a. 2, ad 1, Vol. 5, p. 30.

¹² St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 2, a. 4, Vol. 8, p. 30.

¹³ The Latin text of this early Lullian masterpiece may be consulted in volumes 9 and 10 (last two published volumes) of *MOG*. The original Catalan text may be read in *ORL* II-VIII.

ted his literary career, Llull inserted a separate distinction with six chapters given exclusively to reflections on «the tree of faith and reason.»¹⁴ He did so with more than an implicit acceptance of the two mentioned orders of truths. Thus he acknowledged first that, on the basis of data initially received by way of admittedly limited senses, man is capable, through proper use of his intellect, of gathering reliable and truthful information about significant segments of the realm of reality, and in such a way that he can be confidently certain of it. For all that however, when it comes to some truths and information about God particularly man has no choice but to have recourse to the teachings of faith.¹⁵ There are therefore truths, according to Llull, even about God, which man is able to apprehend *naturaliter* through the work of his intellect.¹⁶ But likewise there are other truths, about God particularly though not exclusively, which we cannot with our intellect alone initially learn about or fully understand on the basis of intellectually necessitating reasons. According to Llull, these truths which man can initially learn about and accept only because God has chosen to reveal them, as well as all other truths which God may have chosen to reveal because of their importance for salvation, actually are the articles of faith¹⁷ which he, an earnest Christian, desired non-Christian believers to share also and to accept, particularly those who were followers of Islam amongst whom he had lived long and whom he knew rather well. It was on their account that he endeavored with and in faith to find compelling reasons which might encourage them to at least begin to inquire into the truth of the Christian Faith.¹⁸

An important item to consider at the start of an investigation of the problem of faith and reason has to do obviously with the correct understanding of faith and reason, particularly as it can be uncovered in the writings of the two thinkers who interest us at present. In his accounts or explanations of faith, both in his widely known *Summa theologica*¹⁹ and in his *Quaestiones disputatae de*

¹⁴ Namely distinction 36, chapters 238-244, *MOG IX*, pp. 41-64.

¹⁵ «Fides est ipsa virtus, quae intellectum cogit ad credendum vera de Deo, quae homo non intelligit per necessarias rationes.» *Declaratio Raimundi per modum dialogi edita contra aliquorum philosophorum et eorum sequacium opiniones erroneas damanatas a venerabili patre domino episcopo parisiensi*, c. 16, *ROL XVII*, p. 282.

¹⁶ «Intellectus est potentia, cum qua homo naturaliter intelligit intelligibilia entia...» *Disputatio Fidei et Intellectus*, prol., *MOG IV*, viii, 1 (479).

¹⁷ «...fidem a Deo datam, ut Catholicus per fidem credat articulos et Sacram Scripturam, quae non intelligit per argumentum», *Disputatio eremitae et Raymundi*, bk. 1, q. 1, in *MOG IV*, iv, 2 (226). Llull wrote at least two books in whose titles appears «articles of faith.» They are: *Liber de quatuordecim articulis sacrosanctae Romanae Catholicae Fidei* in *MOG II*, v, 1-190 (421-610), and *Liber de articulis fidei Sacrosanctae ac Salutiferae Legis Christianae sive Liber apostrophe* in *MOG IV*, ix, 1-26 (505-30).

¹⁸ Examples of these notable efforts: *The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men in Selected Works of Ramon Llull*, tr. Anthony Bonner (Princeton, 1985, Vol. 1, pp. 110-304; *Disputatio Raymundi et Hamar saraceni* in *MOG IV*, vii, 1-46 (431-77); *Liber de quinque sapientibus* in *MOG II*, iii, 1-51 (125-75).

¹⁹ II-IIae, q. 2, a. 1, vol. 8, p. 26-7.

veritate,²⁰ St. Thomas distinguishes faith from other states or frames of mind wherein, at least to some extent, we may find ourselves in possession of some truth, and the latter epistemologically understood as a conformity or agreement between knowledge and reality. Correctly presupposing the objectivity of man's two-fold way of cognitively seizing reality,²¹ of our sentory and of our intellectual knowledge²² that is, Aquinas recalls to our attention in those writings these particular states of mind wherein in some way we have to do with the truth: faith, opinion, doubt, and solid or well established rational human knowledge. The last one in turn he distinguishes into direct or immediate understanding first, and secondly into mediate rational knowledge of which he speaks as science or demonstrative knowledge.²³ With the first of these two instances of well established human knowledge he associates our «intellect», and with the second instance our «reason»,²⁴ though elsewhere he makes it clear that both of these words name the same intellectual or rational cognitive faculty in man. It is differentiated however, on the basis of whether through it we seize truth directly or whether we do so as a result of other previously known premises or truths.

Unlike in the case of opinion and doubt, both faith and rationally established knowledge entail a firm intellectual acceptance of something proposed as true, though with a difference on what motivates that acceptance. In the case of rational knowledge it is simply the evidence, immediate or mediate, that determines and in a sense compels our intellect or reason to give its assent to the truth presented to it. Differently in faith the assent by the intellect comes about as a result in part of a prior movement or influence on the part of the power of the will,²⁵ the latter itself assisted by God's grace when there is question of divine faith, one of the theological virtues in other words.

Opinion and doubt name states of mind that similarly have some bearing on our knowledge of the truth. They differ, however, from both faith and well established rational knowledge in that in neither one of them does our intellect or reason accept a proposed truth firmly or with certitude. Correctly understood, opinion names a state of mind wherein, although we do not accept either a given proposition or its opposite as true firmly, with our intellect we do incline to one or the other as probably true on the basis of reasonable evidence offered for it. We do so, however, with the recognition and with a reasonable fear that the opposite or contradictory of what we may incline to may actually turn out to be

²⁰ Q. 14, a. 1, Vol. 22, pp. 436-7.

²¹ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, I, q. 78, aa 3-4; q. 79, aa. 1-2, vol. 5, pp. 253-57, 258-60.

²² St. Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 1, vol. 22, pp. 435-38.

²³ *Loc. cit.*

²⁴ *Loc. cit.*

²⁵ «Procedit autem huiusmodi actus a voluntate et ab intellectu.» II-IIae, q. 4, a. 2, Vol. 8, p. 45.

the truth.²⁶ Contrariwise in cases of outright doubt there is not even the inclination to one side or the other of a given contradiction, and that either because of no evidence at all on either side or because the available evidence is of equal weight on both sides, with the result consequently that one neither accepts firmly nor inclines to one side or the other of a given contradiction until further evidence or some other motivating factor intervenes.

Without an equally explicit explanation of what enters into and constitutes each of the various states of mind distinguished by Aquinas, Llull is admittedly in agreement with the Angelic Doctor especially on the question of the distinction between faith on the one hand and rationally established knowledge on the other.²⁷ He accordingly defines faith explicitly as a virtue that involves intimately both one's intellect and will.²⁸ Concerning rationally established knowledge, Llull acknowledges that we are capable of learning many truths, and that with certainty on the basis of experience and by means of immediate understanding, as well as through reasoning in many cases by way of intellectually necessitating premises or previously known truths, and of necessary reasons.²⁹ At the same time, however, and in the absence of sufficiently certifying experience or of necessary truths, necessitating premises or reasons, a condition of doubt³⁰ may be and is in order if we are to advance from a state of ignorance to that of some understanding and solid knowledge, or at the very least to reasonably well founded opinions.

It is not out of order to remind ourselves at this point that what has been explained of Aquinas' and of Llull's understanding of faith in the previous paragraphs applies, analogously at least, to both human and divine faith.³¹ The so-called problem of faith and reason has to do obviously, however, with divine faith, as noted at the beginning of this communication. Whereas in human faith we have to do with the acceptance of proposed truths —yes with our intellect moved by the affection of our will, but always on the basis of and in reliance on

²⁶ St. Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 1, Vol. 22, p. 436; *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 2, a. 1, Vol. 8, p. 26.

²⁷ How else may we explain even the titles of writings such as *Disputatio fidei et intellectus* in *MOG* IV, viii, 1-26 (479-504), and *Liber de convenientia fidei et intellectus in objecto* in *MOG* IV, xi, 1-5 (571-5).

²⁸ Llull, *Declaratio Raymundi* in *ROL* XVII, p. 282.

²⁹ «...quando ratio est actualiter in homine, sicut est in homine qui per veras significationes et demonstrationes necessarias habet cognitionem...» *Liber contemplationis in Deum*, c. 239, v. 7, *MOG* X, p. 45.

³⁰ Doubt or *dubitatio* is listed as the first species of the first rule *utrum* (or of possibility) in the last (more definitive) version of Llull's Art. See Llull, Ramon, *Ars generalis ultima* p. 4, c. 1, in *ROL* XIV, p. 26. Discussing the same rule (designated B or possibility) in his *Brevis Practica Tabulae Generalis*, Llull wrote: «et sic transit de dubitatione ad scientiam, et quiescit a labore, in quo erat, dum dubitabat.» *MOG* V, iii, 8 (308).

³¹ Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nn. 1813-14, p. 446. Also see Owens, Joseph, *Cognition, an Epistemological Inquiry*, (Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1992), pp. 282-3.

the trustworthiness and authority of a human person—in the case of divine faith God enters into the picture as the source of the truth in our minds, with a more efficacious influence from Him on our will.³² It is on that account that we speak of it as a theological virtue, in the way Aquinas and other well instructed Christians identify it. For although it inheres in our intellect as in its immediate subject³³ and although it entails a positive influence from our will,³⁴ divine faith is a virtue infused within our intellects and wills by God who gratuitously and efficaciously inclines us through it to accept firmly all divinely revealed truths.³⁵ Llull is likewise on his part rather explicit with his explanation that faith is a virtue given to our intellect by God³⁶ so as to enable us to believe truths about Him which, with out intellect alone, we are not able either to accept or to fully understand.³⁷ Accordingly, therefore, not only does Llull regularly list faith as the first of a number of the more basic created virtues and as one of the primary principles of his universal art—in both its earliest and later more definitive forms—but he defines it clearly too as a God-given virtue, a virtue that enables us to believe *extra naturam*³⁸ truths which our intellect cannot by itself alone understand and know.³⁹ It is consequently God alone who, with and in His grace, bestows it⁴⁰ on all those whom He wills ultimately saved, without of course in the least suggesting thereby that our nature is not endowed with an intellect or reason by means of which we are able to learn about many truths without the supernatural assistance and light given us with and in the theological virtue of faith.

Many of the works of both Aquinas and Llull provide ample evidence that both thinkers were correctly convinced of the possession by man of a spiritual cognitive power commonly known as the intellect or human reason. For Aquinas, as suggested earlier, these last two designations name one and the same intellectual cognitive power within man, a power which functions however

³² St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 6, a. 1, Vol. 8, p. 61.

³³ *Ibid.*, q. 4, a. 2, Vol. 8, p. 43.

³⁴ *Loc. cit.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, II-IIae, q. 6, a. 1, Vol. 8, p. 61.

³⁶ «Fides est virtus ... est habitus a Deo datus», *Ars generalis ultima*, p. 9, *ROL* XIV, p. 277. «Fides vero est lumen a Deo datum», *Disputatio fidei et intellectus*, prol., *MOG* IV, viii, 7 (479).

³⁷ «Fides est virtus a Deo data, ut per ipsam credamus id, quod per intellectum non possumus intelligere», *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem*, def. princ. fig. V. *MOG* I, i, 46 (478). See also *Ars generalis ultima*, p. 9, c. 9, *ROL* XIV, pp. 279-80.

³⁸ «Fides est lumen a Deo datum, cum quo intellectus attingit extra suam naturam intelligendi, credendo de Deo, quod hoc sit verum, quod non attingit intelligendo», *Disp. fidei*, prol., *MOG* IV, viii, 1 (479).

³⁹ «Ad credendum vera de Deo, quae homo non intelligit per necessarias rationes», *Declaratio Raymundi*, c. 16, *ROL* XVII, p. 282.

⁴⁰ «Quia Deus est tantum ille, qui dat lumen fidei hominibus», *Liber mirandarum Demonstrationum*, bk. 1, c. 1, *MOG* II, iv, 2 (178).

in two distinct ways in our discovery of the truth, and thus provides the basis for the usage of the two names. If the knowing power permits us to grasp and know a given truth directly or immediately as it were, because of the self-evidence of what is known in a judgment, then we may speak of it as intellect or the power of understanding. If on the other hand it permits us to learn about a truth mediately or on the basis of evidence received from other previously known truths, with Aquinas then we may more precisely call it the power of reasoning or simply the human reason.⁴¹ Somewhat differently, by «intellect» Llull frequently understood man's rational power to know and understand intelligible entities and truths now or at the present time,⁴² in contradistinction to — but yet with clear and definite links with— our intellectual memory and rational will. Indeed in some early reflections on «the tree of faith and science» in his encyclopedic *Liber contemplationis in Deum* Llull seems to equate reason with those three intellectual powers which are of the very essence of the human soul in its rational character.⁴³ It is certainly the possession of reason, Llull tells us there, that establishes man as the noblest of God's creatures in the whole of His visible creation.⁴⁴ Consequently though by divine faith our intellect is enabled to accept with certainty truths which it cannot adequately understand by its own natural power, it is in virtue of an influence from that same faith on our memory and will that our intellect joyfully and lovingly begins to know and even to understand, at least to some extent, the divinely revealed truths, even then however still accepted however in virtue of that divine faith.⁴⁵

On the preceding pages we stated that, in Christian language «faith» names a divinely infused virtue, one which enables us to accept revealed truths with or in acts that proceed from our intellect and will. According to Aquinas certainly, acts of faith are acts wherein persons, with their intellect moved by their will under an impulse of God's grace and light, firmly accept at least implicitly all truths that have in some way been divinely revealed.⁴⁶ In virtue therefore, of God's gratuitous gift of faith also moving our will, our intellect is thereby also moved to accept revealed truths with a divinely supported assurance, despite the

⁴¹ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, I, q. 79, a. 8, Vol. 5, p. 274.

⁴² Llull, *Lib. cont.*, c. 239, n. 8, *MOG* X, p. 10. Compare St. Thomas, *Summa theol.* I, q. 79, a. 1 ad I, Vol. 5, p. 258.

⁴³ «Si ratio non esset in tribus virtutibus animae potentialiter ... Unde cum ratio sit actualiter intra animam infantuli parvuli...» *Lib. cont.*, c. 239, nn. 5-6, *MOG* X, p. 45.

⁴⁴ «Nam ista ratio actualis (Domine) est in homine melior res quae in eo sit creata: quia per ipsam est homo rationalis et nobilitatus super alias creaturas carentes ratione...» *Ibid.*, n. 9, *MOG* X, p. 45.

⁴⁵ «Fides est ipsa virtus ... quae hilariter facit voluntatem hominis amare veritates Dei, quas intellectus ipsius credit», *Declaratio Raymundi*, c. 16, *ROL* XVII, p. 282.

⁴⁶ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 2, a. 1, Vol. 8, pp. 26-7.

insufficiency or lack of objective intellectual evidence, immediate or mediate, which may bear on the truths in question. Acts of believing on the strength of or in virtue of infused faith, in other words, entail firm assent with a certainty grounded in God's trustworthiness rather than in sufficiently necessitating intellectual evidence derived from the object or the truth in question, one of the requisites obviously of rational understanding and of science according to Aquinas.⁴⁷ A not different way of thinking is at least implicit in Llull's understanding of faith for, according to him, acts of faith or of believing divine truths require and call for the cooperative influence of the will on the intellect under God's grace.⁴⁸ Thus he asserts clearly that in faith we actually believe what is true with our intellect, but in order to do so we definitely need God's light and grace.⁴⁹ It is only thus that a person is able to accept joyfully, with both his intellect and will acting, truths which the intellect by itself alone cannot understand on the strength of necessary reasons.

A third element that enters into the proper understanding of «faith» —so much so that often it is what is in our minds when we utilize the word— is what Aquinas designates the «object.»⁵⁰ Without entering into its distinction as either material or formal, let us simply say that the object is as it were, the content of the faith, that about which divine faith is all about and is what is expressed in the truths believed by it. And as Aquinas declares it, that object is none other than the First Truth,⁵¹ God Himself, communicated within the revealed truths which ought to be received and believed precisely because they have been revealed. Other truths about other things, which in fact have also been revealed by reason of their intimate bonds with God and of our relations with Him, are on that account likewise linked to the object of the faith. Contained within and constituting the object of faith, these truths require also to be accepted as part of the actual content of the faith.⁵² Again though Llull does not in his writings explicitly raise and answer this question in the methodical manner in which Aquinas investigated it, there is no doubt that the virtue of faith with which Llull was frequently concerned has to do with the truths about God and about other items linked to God, simply because God has revealed them. In most cases they are truths that surpass our capacity to know about them and to understand

⁴⁷ St. Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 1. ad 5, vol. 22, p. 438.

⁴⁸ «Et ideo fides est una communis conceptio virtuosa et verus habitus, in quo intellectus habet passionem et voluntas actionem; secundum quod dicit quidam sapiens, quod intellectus et voluntas aequalitatem habent per fidem...» *Declaratio Raymundi*, c. 16, *ROL XVII*, p. 282.

⁴⁹ «...iuvante tamen gratia Dei», *loc. cit.*

⁵⁰ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, I-IIae, q. 62, a. 2, (1981), vol. 6, p. 402.

⁵¹ St. Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 8, Vol. 22, p. 459-60.

⁵² *Ibid.*, q. 14, a. 8, Vol. 22, pp. 259-60; *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 2, aa. 3-4, Vol. 8, pp. 428-30.

them naturally by means of necessary reasons.⁵³ Faith is accordingly like a light given to us by God in order that with our intellect, assisted by our will, we may accept truths which that intellect is incapable of seizing cognitively on its own strength. Through faith God strengthens and enlarges our intellect, as it were, so that thus strengthened we may with that intellect gaze upon the infinite God as its object now, in at least in some small measure. Only with the assistance of divine faith is man's intellect able, in this life already, to rise to some understanding of the First Intelligible with some degree of accuracy, but *super suam naturam*.⁵⁴

We have already called attention to the basic agreement between Aquinas and Llull on the essentials of the problem of reason and faith. We have insinuated that when it comes to questions that touch on God both thinkers are equally opposed to the two extremes of a) an unthinking blind fideism and b) a radical rationalism which leaves no room for faith. Their opposition followed as a matter of course from their explicit acceptance of a) truths capable of a natural discovery by human reason on the one hand, and b) of truths of faith which required revelation on the other hand, if man was to learn about them, and perhaps even to understand to some degree adequately. With their acceptance of the two orders of truths went a constant refusal to confuse one with the other, without for all that keeping them at an irrational distance, and even less altogether apart, on account of an implicit supposed incompatibility or as a result of either indifference or outright hostility to one or the other order of truths. Rather on the contrary, recognizing the intrinsic harmony of all truths by reason of their ultimate single source, each of the two thinkers was able to see clearly that natural and divinely revealed truths can be brought together within a reciprocally advantageous rational synthesis, a synthesis superior to any purely natural wisdom. That synthesis, higher than a sound argumentative but purely philosophical theology, we find of course in the sacred science of theology of which the truths of faith are its main primary source.

Agreement on essentials does not rule out reasonable differences on what is not essential. Such differences can be detected between Aquinas and Llull, without for all that thereby diminishing or compromising the basically orthodox character of their thought on the specific problem under consideration. Here two related points deserve to be mentioned, two points which an occasional critic of

⁵³ «Fides est ipsa virtus, quae cogit ad credendum vera de Deo, quae homo non intelligit per necessarias rationes ... Et talis fides est ita intellectui et voluntati necessaria, ut ipse intellectus et voluntas ipsas veritates Dei contemplari possint», *Declaratio Raymundi*, c. 16, *ROL* XVII, p. 282.

⁵⁴ «Intellectus enim plus potest ascendere ad primum intelligibile, videlicet Deum ... Fides est habitus a Deo datus ... nam super suam naturam est.» *Ars generalis ultima*, p. 9, c. 9, *ROL* XIV, pp. 276-7.

Llull may be tempted to interpret as indicative of outright opposition. The points have to do with answers to these two questions: a) is it possible for us rationally to prove or to demonstrate divinely revealed truths, specifically those which man's unassisted reason cannot itself ever discover on its own because they are *supra* or *extra* naturam? b) is it possible for one and the same person to possess a given truth, at one and the same time, both on faith and on the basis of well established rational knowledge?

At first sight without any doubt the two questions seem to have been answered by Aquinas and Llull in rather opposite ways. One may incline for that reason to the view of a few critics who look upon Llull —the slightly later of the two thinkers by only a few years— as directly contradicting Aquinas. If one remembers at the same time that logically contradictory positions cannot both be true, one may likewise naturally incline to look upon one or the other thinker as mistaken on one or on both questions. Attentive attention however, to what both thinkers actually declared in their main writings may require that one correct, or at least modify, his earlier impression. Aquinas is indeed emphatic in his denial that through their reasoning power men are able to establish conclusively and in a positive fashion revealed truths which were and are beyond the competence of human reason to discover and understand adequately. The distinctive teachings of the most blessed Trinity and other truths that make up the Apostles' Creed are what Aquinas had in mind mainly. Explicitly he declares them «altogether beyond the competence of human reason.»⁵⁵ They are truths accordingly, which cannot «be proven conclusively by a strict demonstration.»⁵⁶ Attempts to do so cannot but be futile, and indeed are bound rather to occasion instead ridicule amongst non-believers.⁵⁷ Regarding such truths it is the case, he tells us, of *simpliciter fides apud omnes*. In a more precise or stricter language, Aquinas would have us speak of them as «articles of faith»⁵⁸ for the reason that they are simply *supra rationem*.⁵⁹ Human reason, as already noted, cannot establish them rationally and positively on the basis of conclusive demonstrations. The Angelic Doctor did not thereby rule out negative proofs which one may construct in order to defend them against the attacks of unbelievers who may declare them irrational. Other arguments, mainly of analogy, are equally possible in order to gain a sympathetic hearing by persons who do not accept those

⁵⁵ St. Thomas, *Summa contra*, c. 3, Vol. 23, p. 7; *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 9. vol. 22, p. 463; *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 1, a. 8, and q. 2, aa. 7-8, Vol. 8, pp. 21, 33-5.

⁵⁶ St. Thomas, *Summa contra*, c. 9, Vol. 13, p. 22; *Summa theol.* II-IIae, q. 1, a. 5, ad 2, Vol. 8, p. 17.

⁵⁷ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 1, a. 5, ad 1, Vol. 8, p. 17; *Summa contra*, c. 9, Vol. 13, p. 22.

⁵⁸ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 1, aa. 6, 8, Vol. 8, pp. 18, 21; I, q. 2, ad 1, Vol. 4, p. 30.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, II-IIae, q. 1, a. 6, Vol. 8, p. 18.

truths because they have not yet been given and received the totally gratuitous gift of faith.⁶⁰ Contrariwise however, Aquinas concedes that conclusive rational demonstrations are indeed possible regarding the truths which are not «imper-vious to reason.»⁶¹ Properly however, these truths are not articles of faith. They should accordingly be seen and designated rather as «preambles» or *praesuppo-sita* of it,⁶² according to Aquinas.

Now, how different is Llull's thought on that question of the rational demonstrability of the truths of faith, including especially those which necessitated their being revealed in order for human persons to learn about them initially and to accept them on faith? Well, it is the case that more than occasionally — and indeed in many writings⁶³ which date from different periods of his life— Llull asserted in rather explicit terms that the essential teachings or articles of the Christian Faith are provable and demonstrable on the basis of necessary reasons, that strict proofs and demonstrations can well be offered for them in other words, without for that denying the possibility, and indeed the necessity, of accepting them on faith. In his writings Llull repeatedly refers to the articles that we confess in the Apostles' Creed as basic and essential within the Christian Faith. Many times he lists as chief amongst them the existence of God, the doctrine of the Trinity, the Incarnation of the Word, the world's creation with a beginning in time, and man's final bodily resurrection at the end of time. In the prologue of an interesting and early *Liber de gentili et tribus sapientibus* —a work divided into four books— Llull informs the reader of his intention first to offer for the benefit of a non-believing gentile, demonstrations of God's existence and of man's future resurrection on the basis of necessary reasons.⁶⁴ After so doing in the first book, he then in the second and fourth books introduces the reader to two learned wisemen, a Jew and a Moslem, who in turn endeavor to outline more or less challenging proofs to establish the superiority of the distinctive teachings of their respective faiths or laws over the Christian Faith and its teachings.⁶⁵ And in the third book of the work the reader becomes acquainted with a highly learned Christian who in turn outlines a number of concise proofs, attempting with them to establish rationally each of the basic

⁶⁰ St. Thomas, *Summa contra.*, c. 9, Vol. 13, p. 22.

⁶¹ *Loc. cit.*; *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 2, a. 10, Vol. 8, p. 39.

⁶² St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, I, q. 2, a. 2, ad 1 (1988), Vol 4, p. 39; II-IIae, q. 2, a. 10, Vol. 8, p. 39.

⁶³ For example *Liber de gentili et tribus sapientibus*, *Liber mirandarum demonstrationum*, and *Liber de articulis fidei Sacrosanctae et Saluiferae Legis Christianae sive Liber apostrophe*. All three may be read in *MOG* II, i and iv, 12-114 (177-420); and IV, ix, 1-26 (505-30). An earlier but longer *Liber de quatuordecim articulis Sacrosanctae Romanae Catholicae Fidei* may be read in *MOG* II, v, 1-190 (421-610).

⁶⁴ Bk. 1, *MOG* II, i, 6-21 (26-41).

⁶⁵ Bks. 2, 4, *MOG* II, i, 21-41, 73-89 (41-61, 93-109).

articles of the Christian Faith contained in the Creed,⁶⁶ without of course denying that they are still the main articles of the Christian Faith.

In a slightly later work, but still one of Llull's early writing with the interesting title of *Liber mirandarum demonstrationum*, the author starts by first declaring his intention still to continue his efforts to persuade non-Christians of man's capacity to understand, on the basis of necessary reasons, the truth of the most distinctive Christian beliefs regarding the Trinity and the Incarnation, on the condition however that one does not initially at the outset totally reject them. A person who does not accordingly reject their truth outright may and will, with a sort of an incipient faith as it were, begin to have some understanding of them and to grasp the reasons that with the encouragement of that quasi-incipient faith can be given for them.⁶⁷ Right after stating that intention in the prologue, in the fifty chapters of each of four books into which the *Liber mirandarum* is divided Llull sketches as many concise proofs —each supported by necessary reasons— in order to demonstrate by means of them, but always with the aid of God's grace, that human reason has the capability or power of: a) proving God's existence, b) of proving the presence within God of a Trinity of Persons with equally necessary reasons, and c) of proving also Christ's Incarnation, likewise with necessary reasons, as well as His future return at the end of the world.⁶⁸

About fifteen years later in 1298, Llull wrote a *Declaratio Raimundi per modum dialogi* in which with arguments he attacked each of 219 theses upheld at the University of Paris by a number of vocal radical Aristotelians during the last three or four decades of the thirteenth century and into the fourteenth century. These 219 theses had been censured by the then bishop of Paris in 1277, as the complete title of the *Declaratio* recalls. In its prologue Llull directs the attention of his opponents to an earlier writing in which he had with success endeavored, he tells us, with rational arguments to prove the truth of the Trinity, of the Incarnation, of the world's non-eternal creation and of man's final resurrection.⁶⁹ Still in a similar vein fourteen years later in 1312, only four years prior to his octogenarian death and in a booklet titled *De novo modo demonstrandi*, Llull again repeated his conviction regarding man's capacity to prove rationally, though within limits, the articles of the Christian Faith, once they have been previously received on or with faith. It is however impossible to succeed in such a task if one relies simply, or even primarily, on what our sensory and imaginative powers tell us, because of the simple reason that the articles of

⁶⁶ Bk. 3, *MOG* II, i, 41-73 (61-93).

⁶⁷ Prol., *MOG* II, iv, 1 (177).

⁶⁸ Bks. 1-4, *MOG* II, iv, 2-18, 19-84, 85-164, 165-244 (178-95, 195-260, 261-340, 341-420).

⁶⁹ *Declaratio Raimundi*, prol., *ROL* XVII, p. 255.

the Christian Faith lie outside the compass of those powers. The task can be accomplished only by an understanding supported by faith, and by effectively utilizing the objectively necessitating *rationes divinae* understood in their highest or superlative condition.⁷⁰ Similarly in the prologue of an *Excusatio Raimundi Llull* again explicitly called attention to his immediate intention of writing another short treatise in which he would simply establish rationally that the truth is that there is only one God who is at the same time a Trinity of Persons.⁷¹

It is accordingly and clearly undeniable that Llull often spoke or wrote of demonstrating and of proving, on the basis of necessary premises and reasons, the principal truths taught as the Christian Faith. As were for Aquinas those truths are of two distinct orders or types: a) some, such as the truth of God's existence, did not have to be revealed absolutely, in order for human beings to know about and to accept them. For that reason Saint Paul alluded to them in his epistle to the Romans. Indeed it is a fact that rational proofs have been offered for at least some of them by philosophers and non-philosophers without the benefit of the teachings of religions which accept divine revelation. We have seen that Aquinas would have us speak of these truths as «preambles» rather than «articles» of the Christian Faith.⁷² b) Other truths of the Christian Faith however, we have already seen, stood in need of a supernatural disclosure or revelation in order for human beings to learn about them and accept them initially, for the simple reason that they are *supra rationem*.⁷³

Llull's apparent opposition to Aquinas' explicit rejection of any conclusive positive demonstrations for the teachings or articles of the Christian Faith is greatly diminished, and may even seem to disappear, if note is taken of the fact that often when Llull wrote of «proofs» and «demonstrations», even by way of «necessary reasons», he did so in a less rigorous meaning than Aquinas had in mind.⁷⁴ A similar assertion may be made when comparing other equally outstanding thinkers, as for example Aquinas again and John Duns Scotus.⁷⁵ The latter, it is well known, differed somewhat from, indeed may have been more demanding than, Aquinas on the question of the conditions and other requirements of a

⁷⁰ *De novo mundo demonstrandi*, prol., *ROL* XVI, p. 348.

⁷¹ Prol., *ROL* XI, p. 340.

⁷² St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, I, q. 2, a. 2, ad 2, Vol. 4, p. 30; II-IIae, q. 2, a. 10, ad 2, vol. 8, p. 39.

⁷³ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 2, a. 3, Vol. 8, p. 28. Llull, *Disputatio fidei et intellectus*, prol., *MOG* IV, viii, 1 (479); *Declaratio Raimundi*, c. 16, *ROL* XVII, pp. 282-3; *Ars generalis ultima*, p. 9, c. 9, *ROL* XIV, pp. 275-6.

⁷⁴ As evidence read the prologue of *Liber mirandarum demonstrationum* already cited.

⁷⁵ How else can we explain John Duns Scotus' dissatisfaction with Aquinas' First Way or proof for God's existence and a number of divine attributes, a situation which led Scotus to develop his own distinct proof of God's existence.

strict demonstration regarding important philosophical problems, inclusive specifically of the existence of God. It is therefore well to keep this in mind unless one wishes to ignore or disregard completely the context and the tenor of the specific writings in which Llull made use of the word «demonstration» and of other words related or similar to it. A possible explanation of Llull's less rigorous usage of «demonstration» may be given if we remember that in the Catalan language —the philosopher's native tongue, one in which he wrote a sizeable number of his books,— as well as in other romance languages, the word «demonstració» or its equivalent in those other languages does not carry in ordinary usage the meaning of a strict demonstrative proof in an Aristotelian sense.⁷⁶ Certainly if, with just a little attention, one inspects a few of the proofs which Llull outlined in support of the main articles of the Christian Faith in many books, one will readily note that they do not exhibit the rigor of a quasi-mathematical proof in a neat syllogistic form.⁷⁷ Some of the proofs which he proposed may even perhaps rather be considered arguments by analogy, or even simply strong persuasive arguments that cumulatively however, cannot but exhibit a much greater persuasive force. In one of his own writings Llull even expressed himself thus «ista probatio, sive dicatur demonstratio, sive persuasio, vel quocumque alio modo, hoc non curo; quia ... nihil mutatur in re.»⁷⁸ Llull's main concern was to make the point that readers and listeners of what he had to say ought to, or at least could be led to, accept the truth of the main Christian teachings not simply on or with faith —a gift which God alone can bestow on man, he understood and tells us,— but also with at least a minimum of understanding and of knowledge supported by intellectually necessitating reasons, objectively sufficient to make the truth manifest to open and receptive thinking persons.⁷⁹

A more telling explanation for the apparent disagreement between Llull and Aquinas on the question of whether revealed truths —specifically those requiring revelation to enable man to learn about them initially,— can be rationally or scientifically established, without thereby rendering faith practically null or unnecessary, is perhaps more than intimated by the second question still to be looked at shortly. The more telling reason is suggested by a third type of demonstration, seemingly unknown to earlier thinkers but accepted and utilized by Llull in the solution of many questions. It is neither found nor alluded to in the writings of the Angelic Doctor. But although Llull did not in every instance

⁷⁶ Under the title of *Libre de demostracions* the Catalan text may be read in *ORL* XV.

⁷⁷ In confirmation examine many of the proofs offered in the fifty short chapters of each of the four books of the *Liber mirandarum demonstrationum*, as well as many of those offered in the four books of the *Liber de gentili et tribus sapientibus* also already cited.

⁷⁸ Llull, *Liber de convenientia fidei et intellectus in objecto*, p. 1, *MOG* IV, xi, 4 (572).

⁷⁹ Llull, *Liber mirandarum*, bk. 1, c. 1, *MOG* II, iv, 2 (178).

identify or explain them always in the same terms, in some of his later writings he distinguished three types of demonstrations. He named them *propter quid*, *quia* and *per aequiparantiam*,⁸⁰ and he cautioned the reader at the same time that of the three the third type, to wit the *per aequiparantiam* type of demonstrations, was unknown to the ancients and supposedly to many of his immediate predecessors.⁸¹ He then adds however, that when questions bear on the reality of God in a significant way then neither of the two types of proofs available to the ancients is of much effective use. We cannot appeal, he explains, to causes or to anything else which may be prior to God by nature or in some other way, as called for in *propter quid* demonstrations, since He is totally uncaused and there is nothing else that precedes Him in any way. Neither is it possible to have recourse to finite effects—and all created entities are that way—as required in the case of *quia* demonstrations, in order to learn with some adequacy about the entitative interior and inner activity within the infinite transcendent First Being.⁸² It is therefore the case that neither of the two types of demonstrations «known to the ancients» is capable of being used in order to demonstrate the truth of the revealed articles of faith, in the language suggested by Aquinas.⁸³

The situation is different however, when one takes into account the third type of demonstration which Llull identified as «*per aequiparantiam*.»⁸⁴ Through recourse to it he himself endeavored again and again to prove rationally the chief doctrines or articles of the Christian Faith, without for all that disregarding or in the least setting aside what he had earlier and sincerely accepted by faith.⁸⁵ Nor did he thereby claim to be able now to comprehend fully, or even much of, the mysterious interior reality of the Godhead.⁸⁶ If attempts at rationally investigating questions concerning God are to prove successful however, there is one essential condition or prerequisite that must be satisfied. That condition is simply that the inquirer be previously rationally satisfied—this a consequence, it is true of an initial incipient trust or reliance, somewhat akin to some sort of faith at least implicitly—that God's infinite perfections exist together in a perfect or absolute equality and reciprocal identity with each other and with the

⁸⁰ See *Liber de demonstratione per aequiparantiam* prol., ROL IX, p. 216; *Liber mirandarum*, bk. 2, c. 13, MOG II, iv, 35 (211); *Introductorium Artis demonstrativae*, c. 3, MOG III, i, 4 (58); *Ars demonstrativa*, prol., MOG III, ii, 1 (93); *Liber de quinque sapientibus*, prol., MOG II, iii, 4 (128).

⁸¹ *Introductorium Artis demonstrativae*, c. 3, MOG III, i, 4 (58); *Liber de quinque sapientibus*, prol., MOG II, iii, 4 (128).

⁸² *Liber de quinque sapientibus*, prol., MOG II, iii, 4 (128).

⁸³ *Loc. cit.*; *De novo modo demonstrandi*, prol., ROL XVI, p. 348.

⁸⁴ *Loc. cit.*

⁸⁵ *Liber de convenientia*, c. 1, MOG IV, xi, 4 (572).

⁸⁶ *Disputatio fidei*, p. 1, MOG IV, viii, 3 (481).

divine essence and being.⁸⁷ It is on the basis of that infinite reciprocal presence and identity —something which follows from God's simplicity and infinity of being,— that it is possible then, by means of *per aequiparantiam* demonstrations of which Llull made use, to establish in a rational manner truths which God chose to reveal and of which man could learn about initially only by way of a supernatural intervention and revelation, as taught by the Christian Faith.⁸⁸

It may be said that, according to Llull's understanding, *per aequiparantiam* demonstrations, with the necessary reasons supporting them, are objectively sufficient to establish rationally the essential truth of the basic teachings or articles of the Christian Faith. Our subjective acceptance of them however, is not an exclusively intellectual affair. No person therefore, is unconditionally compelled to acquiesce in their truth intellectually because there always remains a certain degree of freedom regarding them on our part. Though basically intellectual, the acceptance of those truths also calls for some action on the side of man's will. At least there must be a readiness or sincere willingness to accept the truth regardless of its initial source.⁸⁹ Only then may a person be said to be ready, with both his intellect and will, to receive it not only in faith (should the latter be given by God), but also to understand it with a sufficient degree of adequacy on the basis of reasons which support it sufficiently, even in matters of divine faith. Unless therefore a person believes first —at least in the sense that he or she has a willingness to accept the truth, provided it is properly presented to him or her, so that he or she is ready to accept the gift of faith, should it please God to bestow it— that person cannot grasp and understand the necessary reasons which, according to Llull, demonstrate in a rational manner the truths of faith. Those persons therefore, who in a very real sense willfully reject even the possibility of the truth inherent in the teachings of faith, cannot but fail intellectually to grasp any demonstrations brought forward to prove those teachings and truths.⁹⁰

Llull's admittedly less rigorous understanding of demonstration and his acceptance and usage of a third type of demonstrations absent from Aquinas' writings dictate that we do not view his thought regarding demonstrations of revealed truths as in direct opposition to the stated position of Aquinas. That understanding and acceptance go a long way also towards explaining Llull's contention, again at first sight seemingly at odds with Aquinas, that a given truth can be held by one and the same person simultaneously on faith and as consequence of rationally established knowledge or science. To this item of the

⁸⁷ *Liber de articulis fidei*, prol., MOG IV, viii, 24 (502).

⁸⁸ *Loc. cit.*

⁸⁹ *Liber mirandarum*, bk. 4, prol., MOG II, iv, 166 (342).

⁹⁰ *Loc. cit.*

rejection of such a possibility by Aquinas and of its contrary affirmation and acceptance by Llull we now direct our attention.

More than once and that both in his *Quaestio disputata de veritate*⁹¹ and in his *Summa theologiae*⁹² the Angelic doctor concisely and forcefully asserts that it is impossible for a given truth to be held by a person at the same time on faith and by way of scientific knowledge.⁹³ As if to explain his seemingly uncompromising stand he asserts that faith and science are not just simply distinct postures, for they are rather mutually exclusive, whenever of course they concern the same object and truth. That they be found together in the same person is impossible, Aquinas contends, because faith is about the unseen, understood as what is not evident either to our senses or to our intellect directly or indirectly. Man's naturally acquired knowledge (including the scientific type) is about objects and truths that are themselves evident or seen directly—then it is a matter of understanding or *intellectus*, Aquinas asserts—or, as in the case of reasoned scientific knowledge, indirectly through principles or truths previously known and understood.⁹⁴ Scientific knowledge is therefore through or by way of reasoning which is very distinct from and other than direct understanding.

With a different frame of mind clearly, not long after Aquinas' death, in his own writings Llull took a different, not to say opposite, view to what was expressed by Aquinas when he insisted that «de eodem not sit fides et scientia»⁹⁵ (within of course the same person at one and the same time). There is no great difficulty in showing that Llull was neither explicitly nor directly attacking the Angelic Doctor with his own seemingly paradoxical stand, provided one takes note of the fact, as suggested earlier, that Llull had other adversaries in mind at the time when he stated his own position. We indicated then that chief amongst those adversaries was a seemingly vocal group of radical Aristotelians, today often known as Latin Averroists, whom Llull met and confronted at Paris during the closing decades of the thirteenth century and at the start of the fourteenth century. At about the same time Llull needed also to challenge the implicit fideism of certain contemporary and seemingly timid Christians and theologians unable, even perhaps unwilling, to bolster and defend the main tenets of the Christian Faith with rationally convincing arguments.⁹⁶ One gathers from a num-

⁹¹ Q. 14, a. 9, Vol. 22, p. 463.

⁹² II-IIae, q. 1, a. 5, Vol. 8, p. 16.

⁹³ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 1, a. 5, ad 2, Vol. 8, p. 17; *De veritate*, Q. 14, aa. 1,9, Vol. 22, pp. 437, 463.

⁹⁴ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 1, a. 5, Vol. 8, p. 13; *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 1, Vol. 22, pp. 436-7.

⁹⁵ St. Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 9, Vol. 22, p. 463; *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 1, a. 5, Vol. 8, p. 13.

⁹⁶ Fernando Domínguez's introduction to Ramon Llull's *Principia Philosophiae* in *ROL IX*, pp. 15-16.

ber of writings which Llull finished during those years that both the mentioned radical Aristotelians and the slightly fideistic theologians openly and not infrequently asserted, obviously for different reasons, that the Christian Faith was practically unintelligible, not to say totally irrational.⁹⁷ By so declaring, they made it extremely difficult, and at times well-nigh impossible, to lead thoughtful educated non-Christian believers sympathetically to look into the truth and reasonableness of the main Christian teachings.⁹⁸

Though admittedly therefore not in direct opposition to the stated position of Aquinas on the issue, Llull's repeated assertions of the possibly simultaneous presence of both faith and scientific understanding regarding a given truth within one and the same person cannot but appear at first sight in sharp contrast to it. Still one may legitimately ask how much of a difference, if not of direct opposition, there actually obtains between the two thinkers on that particular issue. In one of his earliest reflections on the relation between faith and reason, contained in his encyclopedic *Liber contemplationis in Deum*, Llull expressed the basically same thought of Aquinas on the mutual exclusiveness of faith and reason, when both are about the same truth within one person and at the same time. In those early reflections he there first distinguished three distinct modes or ways in which faith may be found present in a particular person: actually, potentially and in a habitual or intermediate manner. Llull there wrote these words: «haec fides actualis (Domine,) non potest in uno tempore capi simul cum ratione in anima hominis, et hoc est quia ipsa quando est actualis implet totam memoriam et intellectum et voluntatem ipsius animae...»⁹⁹ Had Aquinas made exactly the same explicit distinction in his writings, perhaps one could then say that both thinkers were of exactly the same mind, the more so if it could be established that each was thinking specifically of the theological virtue of faith of which Christians speak. This has to be noted because, when he wrote the just mentioned words, Llull may have been thinking also of any other type of genuine religious faith. He clearly did so at other times when he wrote of the Jewish faith or even that of other non-Christian believers.¹⁰⁰

More to the point without a doubt is a difficulty which easily comes up in connection with Aquinas' categorical «de eodem non sit fides et scientia.»¹⁰¹ From what we have seen, it can be affirmed with assurance that both Aquinas and Llull viewed the authentic faith of the Christian as a basic theological vir-

⁹⁷ *Supplicatio sacrae theologiae professoribus ac baccalareis studii parisiensis*, prol., *MOG* IV, x, 1 (563).

⁹⁸ *Disputatio fidei*, p. 1, *MOG* IV, viii, 2 (480).

⁹⁹ C. 238, n. 12, *MOG* X, 42.

¹⁰⁰ See titles of books 2, 4 in *Liber de gentili*, *MOG* II, i, 21-73 (41-93).

¹⁰¹ *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 9, Vol. 22, p. 463; *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 6, Vol. 8, p. 16.

tue, one that accordingly has God as its proper object, as well as its efficient origin or cause.¹⁰² Though he perhaps seems not to have utilized the term «theological» to identify the faith of the Christian, Llull certainly viewed that faith as God-given and as an infused virtue.¹⁰³ He explicitly distinguished it and contrasted it with science or demonstrative rational knowledge, the latter an obviously natural human intellectual virtue in the language of philosophy.¹⁰⁴ At the same time therefore, that they declared science an acquired natural virtue, both Aquinas and Llull —each in his own words— asserted the supernatural character of the infused virtue of faith, a virtue which enables our intellect, and ourselves with it, to learn about first and then to accept truths which would otherwise escape our knowledge, for the simple reason that they exceed the natural power and ways of the human intellect.¹⁰⁵ In their own distinct words they both wrote accordingly of the diversity of faith and science, and they clearly viewed both of them as very distinct types or species of virtues:¹⁰⁶ science as a definitely natural acquired virtue, and faith on the other hand as a supernatural virtue bestowed on men by God in a totally gratuitous manner.¹⁰⁷

Granted the distinction in type or in species of virtues between science and faith, it is easy to see that no outright opposition obtains between the two of them. Consequently it is more than conceivable that they can be present together within one person, even when they are about one and the same truth at the same time. Very possibly it is so in reality since obviously one and the same truth has been grasped or received differently, one may say, first with the eyes and acceptance of a supernaturally given faith, and secondly thereafter with the eyes and assent of our naturally possessed intellect.¹⁰⁸ In the explained position of Aquinas however, it is far from clear how a natural virtue can set aside and substitute, as it were, for an admittedly superior supernatural virtue which,

¹⁰² Llull, *Ars generalis ultima*, p. 9, c. 9, *ROL XIV*, pp. 275-6; *Disputatio fidei*, prol., *MOG IV*, viii, 1 (479); *Liber mirandarum*, bk. 1, c. 1, *MOG II*, iv, 2 (178).

¹⁰³ *Declaratio Raimundi*, c. 16, *ROL XVII*, 282; *Disputatio fidei*, prol., *MOG IV*, viii, 43 (419).

¹⁰⁴ «Ipsam autem per habitum fidei credimus, et per habitum sapientiae intelligimus. Et non sequitur contradictio, per hoc quia habitus fidei et sapientiae non sunt idem specie nec numero.» *Ars Mystica*, d. 3, p. 3, *ROL V*, p. 344. *Ars generalis ultima*, p. 9, c. 9, *ROL XIV*, p. 276.

¹⁰⁵ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, I-IIae, q. 62, aa. 1-2 (1901), Vol. 6, pp. 401-2. Llull, *Disputatio fidei*, prol., *MOG IV*, viii, 1 (479); *Declaratio Raimundi*, c. 16, *ROL XVII*, p. 282.

¹⁰⁶ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, I-IIae, q. 62, a. 2, Vol. 6, p. 403. Llull, *Disputatio fidei*, prol., *MOG IV*, viii, 1 (479); *Ars generalis ultima*, p. 9, c. 9, *ROL XIV*, pp. 276-7, 279.

¹⁰⁷ Llull, *Ars generalis ultima*, p. 9, c. 9, *ROL XIV*, p. 276; *Disputatio fidei*, prol., *MOG IV*, viii, 1 (479).

¹⁰⁸ Llull, *Ars generalis ultima*, p. 9, c. 9, *ROL XIV*, p. 276. For the correctness of his thought Llull could today appeal to the declaration of the First Vatican Council on the natural knowableness of God's existence, as well as to the statement in the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* which declares that «I believe in God» is the first and most fundamental affirmation of the Creed.

given its higher God-given efficacy, enables us to accept supernaturally revealed truths. There is evidence in their respective writings that both Aquinas and Llull were aware of this difficulty. Llull stayed clear of it and had no need to address it because of his conviction that the virtue of faith and the merit which attaches to it remain, indeed will very likely increase, even after some rational understanding has come about or taken place about as a result of necessary reasons, provided it has followed, it has been noted, the prior or at least implicit acceptance of the revealed truths of faith.¹⁰⁹ Differently on the other hand, Aquinas appears to have made a conscious effort to avoid the difficulty with an assertion that the merit which normally attaches to faith is not set aside, even though faith has been replaced by scientific knowledge. That because of the supposed believer's continued willingness to accept a truth in faith, should it occur that, for whatever reason, demonstration ceases to be effective or fully operative in the case of truths now presumably scientifically known.¹¹⁰

The simultaneous acceptance of a revealed truth a) on account of the theological virtue of faith and b) because of understanding as a result of demonstrative reasoning is possible, according to Llull's explanations, for the simple reason that, as long as divine faith is present in an authentic mode, understanding of the same truth can come about or follow, inspired and assisted of course by the preceding and still accompanying faith in that truth.¹¹¹ In addition everything will occur in such a way however, that the higher understanding of the truth rises due to appropriate necessitating reasons, the stronger and higher faith becomes and rises at the same time. An analogy to what happens may be seen in the way oil rises higher above the level of water in a container, the more water is added to that already in the container.¹¹² Add to this, that merit must not be deemed the main component of faith, although Llull would argue for practically the same reason that merit is neither set aside nor diminished when new or additional understanding blossoms under the inspiration of faith.¹¹³

One more item may well be noted in order to gauge more accurately the extent of the difference (and of a possible opposition) implied in some of Llull's ideas on this last question as against the thought expressed by Aquinas. This added item is nothing less than a seeming inconsistency detected within some statements of Aquinas with a bearing directly on the question. Only pages after

¹⁰⁹ *Ars generalis ultima*, p. 9, c. 9, *ROL XIV*, p. 276; *Disputatio fidei*, prol., *MOG IV*, viii, 2-3 (480-1).

¹¹⁰ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, II-IIae., q. 2, a. 10, ad 2, Vol. 8, p. 39.

¹¹¹ Llull, *Ars generalis ultima*, p. 9, c. 9, *ROL XIV*, p. 278.

¹¹² «Sicut oleum in vase, in quo est supra aquam; et qui adderet plus de aqua in praedicto vase, aqua quidem ascenderet ad illum locum, in quo erat oleum; et deinde oleum ascenderet in altiore gradum, in quo non erat.» *Ars generalis ultima*, p. 9, c. 9, *ROL XIV*, p. 276.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 278-9.

his explicit rejection in his *Quaestio disputata de veritate* to the effect that it is not possible that «de eodem sit fides et scientia»¹¹⁴ simultaneously within one person, Aquinas went on to explain and defend this: that there are at least two truths which must needs be held by all human beings (who supposedly have reached the age of reason) with an explicit faith in order to be on the way to their eternal salvation. The truths are a) that God is possessed of real existence, and b) that He exercises a providence that extends to all human affairs.¹¹⁵ Elsewhere in the very same *Question*¹¹⁶ however, as well as somewhat early in the *Summa theologiae*,¹¹⁷ Aquinas had insisted with confident assurance that the truth of God's existence confessed at the beginning of the Creed, is not properly an article of faith. Rather it is a preamble or a *praesuppositum* of it.¹¹⁸ As such it is susceptible of a strict demonstration by sound human reasoning. God's existence, in other words, is a demonstrable truth and capable therefore of being received by us with solid scientific knowledge.¹¹⁹ But yet on the other hand in the passage from the *De veritate* just alluded to Aquinas has instructed readers that the truth of God's existence is one of two truths that have to be held on faith in order to achieve salvation and eternal bliss. Now, if a truth, namely that of the existence of God, can be the object of a strict positive demonstration and can therefore be known scientifically, but if at the same time with Aquinas one declares that it is a truth that must be held with an explicit faith in order to insure salvation, obviously then it follows that at least in the case of that truth it is possible for someone to hold it at the same time both on faith and on the basis of scientific knowledge. I say «at least», because there are at least other truths, namely God's providence, the unicity or oneness of God, etc. about which similar points can be made on the basis of what Aquinas says about them in his writings. In those places of his writings wherein he discusses the number of the articles explicitly enumerated in the Creed the Angelic Doctor acknowledges that, as its first article declares, we believe, i.e. accept in faith, that only one God Exists.¹²⁰ Clearly he there wrote of the oneness of God as being the first article of the Christian Faith, a truth consequently which presumably can only be known by us with certainty because it has been supernaturally revealed. Moreover since it is «an article», indeed the first article of the Creed, again presumably it cannot be known with scientific certainty simply on the basis of conclusive human reason-

¹¹⁴ Q. 14, a. 9, Vol. 22, p. 463.

¹¹⁵ *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 11, Vol. 22, p. 470.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, q. 14, a. 9, Vol. 22, p. 463.

¹¹⁷ I, q. 2, a. 2, ad 1, Vol. 4, p. 30.

¹¹⁸ *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 10, ad 8, Vol. 22, p. 464.

¹¹⁹ *Loc. cit.* Also *Summa theol.*, I, q. 2, aa. 2-3, (1888), Vol. 4, pp. 30-2.

¹²⁰ *Summa theol.*, II-IIae, q. 1, a. 8, Vol. 8, p. 21.

ning. But again on more than one occasion elsewhere in his writings Aquinas more than implied that the oneness or unicity of God can be demonstratively established, and indeed he undertook to do so.¹²¹ Moreover his proofs or Ways for God's existence, like those of other classical theists, aim to conclude by philosophical reasoning to the existence of only one supreme First being or God.

From what has been brought out on the preceding pages of Aquinas' and of Llull's understanding of the problem of the relations of faith and reason, we may arrive at the conclusion that the positions of the two medieval thinkers are not as antithetical or as far apart as it may appear at first sight and as some critics seem to suggest. More important: the conclusion seems indeed inescapable that on that basic question of the distinction and relation between religious faith and rational understanding the thought of Ramon Llull, and not only that of Thomas Aquinas, is both reasonable and in basic harmony with orthodox Christian thought. That is the way it had to be according to Llull's sincerest intentions. A careful Christian thinker that he was, he always intended, more than anything else, to persuade readers and others of the fact that a solid philosophical understanding of the truth cannot but be in accord with the higher truths taught as the Christian Faith.¹²² For that reason, and as it is well borne out by his numerous writings, he is indeed a true model and example of authentic Christian philosophers.

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RESUM

The differences between Aquinas and Llull on questions of faith and reason are perhaps not as great as has sometimes been stated. Both agreed that there are truths the intellect cannot comprehend and both agreed on their basic definition of faith. Both were opposed to blind fideism and to radical rationalism, and accepted a division between truths capable of being discovered by reason and those which required revelation, that is to say, between science and faith. They differed, however, on two questions: a) on the possibility of rationally proving divine truth, and b) on that of the same person at the same time possessing a truth both on the strength of faith and reason. As to the first, both admitted proofs by analogy or of congruence, but to

¹²¹ *Summa theol.*, I, q. 11, a. 3, Vol. 4, p. 111; *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 9, Vol. 22, p. 463.

¹²² Llull, *Liber mirandarum*, prol. *MOG* II, iv, 1 (177); also bk. 3, prol. *MOG* II, iv, 85 (261); *Supplicatio sacrae*, prol., *MOG* IV, x, 1 (563).

these Llull added his *demonstratio per aequiparantiam*. As to the second, even Aquinas accepted the *preambula fidei* as being revealed truths accessible to reason, whereas Llull used the metaphor of understanding being like oil floating on the water of faith, in which the greater the faith the higher the understanding. Their two positions, therefore, although different, are not antithetical.